I CLAIM:

1. A method for utilizing a title signal contained in digital data through a comparison

5   of the title signal to a player signal stored in a player device, the method comprising the steps

of:

      downloading the digital data having the title signal via an Internet connection;

      transferring the downloaded digital data to the player device;

      detecting, at the player device, the title signal in the data:

10   comparing the title signal to the player signal; and

      performing an action based upon the comparison.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the digital data is streaming audio or video data.

15   3. The method of claim 1, wherein the player signal is indicative of an attribute of the

device, device user, data, or data owner.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the title signal is a watermark signal, or a

subsignal thereof, encoded in the digital data, wherein the method further comprises the steps

20   of:

      extracting the watermark signal from the digital data; and

      decoding the watermark signal or subsignal thereof.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the watermark signal contains a copy protection

25   subsignal of a predetermined number of bits, the title signal being a portion of the

predetermined number of bits unused by the copy protection subsignal.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the action is performed if the title signal matches

the player signal.

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7. The method of claim 6, wherein the action is to inform the device user of the match and at least one consequence thereof.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the consequence is informing the user of the winning of a prize.

9. The method of claim 7, wherein the digital data is digital video data.

10. The method of claim 7, wherein the digital data is digital audio data.

11. The method of claim 7, wherein the action is to inform the device user of the match and of the player signal.

12. The method of claim 3, wherein the player signal is indicative of a device number.

13. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of encoding the title signal in a time varying manner.

14. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of inputting the player signal to the player device prior to the comparing step.

15. The method of claim 6, wherein perfect matching between the title signal and player signal is necessary in order to perform the action.

16. The method of claim 6, wherein imperfect or approximate matching between the title signal and player signal is permitted in order to perform the action.

17. The method of claim 6, wherein the title signal and player signal contain at least two fields, each field comprising a group of bits, wherein matching of fields between the title signal and player signal is permitted in order to perform the action.

18. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one title signal which when compared to the player signal evokes the performance of the action.

5   19. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one title signal which when compared to the player signal evokes the performance of the action, is chosen to match at least one targeted demographic group.

20. The method of claim 1, wherein the action is performed if the title signal matches

10   the player signal and the action is to inform the device user of the match.

21. The method of claim 1, wherein the player device is a personal computer and the transferring step comprises storing the downloaded data to a recordable medium readable by the player device.

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22. The method of claim 21, wherein the detecting, comparing and performing steps are performed after the storing step is completed.

23. The method of claim 21, wherein the detecting, comparing and performing steps

20   are performed after the downloaded digital data is partially stored such that the title signal is available for use in the method before the storing step is completed.

24. The method of claim 1, wherein the player device is a personal computer and at least the detecting step is performed in real time as the digital data is downloaded.

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25. A method for utilizing a title signal contained in digital data through a comparison of the title signal to a player signal stored in, or available from, a personal computer, the method comprising the steps of:

       providing the digital data having the title signal;

30   detecting, at the personal computer, the title signal in the data;

comparing the title signal to the player signal; and

performing an action based upon the comparison.

26. The method of claim 25, wherein the action is performed if the title signal

5   matches the player signal.

27. The method of claim 26, wherein the action is to inform the personal computer user of the match and at least one consequence thereof.

10   28. The method of claim 27, wherein the consequence is informing the user of the winning of a prize.

29. The method of claim 27, wherein the action is to inform the personal computer user of the match and of the player signal.

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30. A method for utilizing a title signal contained in a computer readable set of instructions through a comparison of the title signal to a player signal stored in, or available from, a personal computer, the method comprising the steps of:

providing the computer readable set of instructions having the title signal;

20   detecting the title signal in the computer readable set of instructions:

comparing the title signal to the player signal; and

performing an action based upon the comparison.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein the action is performed if the title signal

25   matches the player signal.

32. The method of claim 31, wherein the action is to inform the personal computer user of the match and at least one consequence thereof.

33. The method of claim 32, wherein the consequence is informing the user of the winning of a prize.

34. The method of claim 32, wherein the action is to inform the personal computer
5   user of the match and of the player signal.

35. The method of claim 34, wherein the computer readable set of instructions having the title signal contained therein is provided to the personal computer by downloading via an Internet connection.
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36. The method of claim 25, wherein the player signal is embedded within the computer readable set of instructions.

37. The method of claim 25, wherein the detecting step comprises computing the
15   player signal from the information available from the personal computer.

38. The method of claim 25, wherein the comparing step is performed by a subset of instructions contained within the computer readable set of instructions.

20   39. The method of claim 25, wherein the computer readable set of instructions represents an application program executable by the personal computer, wherein the personal computer has an operating system for launching the application, and wherein the detecting step is performed by the operating system.

25   40. The method of claim 39, wherein the operating system also performs the comparing and/or performing steps.

41. The method of claim 25, further comprising the step of expiring the player signal after a predetermined time such that it is no longer useful for comparison to the title signal.
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42. The method of claim 41, further comprising the step of updating the player signal for comparison to the title signal.

43. A method for utilizing a title signal contained in digital data to be input into a computer readable set of instructions through a comparison of the title signal to a player signal stored in, or available from, a personal computer, the method comprising the steps of:

    providing the digital data having the title signal;

    inputting the digital data to the computer readable set of instructions;

    detecting the title signal in the digital data:

    comparing the title signal to the player signal; and

    performing an action based upon the comparison.

44. The method of claim 43, wherein the action is performed if the title signal matches the player signal.

45. The method of claim 44, wherein the action is to inform the personal computer user of the match and at least one consequence thereof.

46. The method of claim 45, wherein the consequence is informing the user of the winning of a prize.

47. The method of claim 43, wherein the action is to inform the personal computer user of the match and of the player signal.

48. The method of claim 43, wherein the computer readable set of instructions is a word processing application program and the digital data is a document read thereby.

49. A method for utilizing a title signal contained in digital data and a player signal stored in a player device, the method comprising the steps of:

     encrypting the title signal using a private key;

     detecting, at the player device, the title signal in the data;

5   decrypting the encrypted title signal using the player signal as the private key;

     determining if the result of the decryption step results in the title signal; and

     performing an action based upon the determination.

50. The method of claim 49, wherein the action is performed if the result of the

10   decryption results in the title signal.

51. The method of claim 50, wherein the action is to inform the device user of the determination and at least one consequence thereof.

15   52. The method of claim 51, wherein the consequence is informing the user of the winning of a prize.